7 August 2001

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Committee on Conferences
Substantive session of 2001
Agenda item 2 (c)

Calendar of conferences and meetings: requests for exceptions to section I, paragraph 7, of General Assembly resolution 40/243

Note by the Secretariat

1. In section I, paragraph 7, of its resolution 40/243 of 18 December 1985, the General Assembly decided that no subsidiary organ of the General Assembly may meet at United Nations Headquarters during a regular session of the Assembly unless explicitly authorized by the Assembly.

2. Every year, a certain number of requests for exceptions to that rule are received. In accordance with established practice, the requests are first submitted to the Committee on Conferences, which then makes a recommendation to the General Assembly.

3. At its substantive session of 1986, the Committee on Conferences reviewed the procedure by which it dealt with such requests and decided that, in future, the following procedure should be adopted:[1]

(a) Subsidiary organs of the General Assembly wishing to request explicit authorization from the Assembly to meet at Headquarters during the session should write to the Chairman of the Committee on Conferences, except in unforeseen circumstances, before the substantive session of the Committee; the letter should be circulated to all members of the Committee, together with appropriate servicing information provided by the Secretariat;

(b) The request should contain the reason or reasons why the authorization is being requested and/or the reason or reasons why the organ concerned did not finish its work during the time allotted to it, in compliance with the 1 September deadline for the completion of reports of subsidiary organs of the General Assembly, as laid down in section I, paragraph 6, of resolution 40/243;

(c) The request should also explain why it is necessary to meet during the General Assembly and should specify, to the extent possible, the number of meetings required;

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(d) In the event that approval is forthcoming, all such meetings would be allocated conference services on an "as available" basis, from within existing resources, in such a way that the work of the General Assembly and its Main Committees is not impeded.

4. The annex to the present document contains the requests received to date from subsidiary organs of the General Assembly to meet at Headquarters during the fifty-sixth session of the Assembly, as well as the relevant statistical information. Requests received after the submission of the present note will be issued in an addendum.

Notes

[1] *Official Records of the General Assembly, Forty-first Session, Supplement No. 32* (A/41/32), para. 64.

Annex

I. Requests for meetings during the fifty-sixth session of the General Assembly

A. Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People

Letter dated 26 June 2001 from the Chairman of the Committee

As you are aware, in resolution 55/52 of 1 December 2000, the General Assembly requested the Committee to continue to keep under review the situation relating to the question of Palestine and to report and make suggestions to the General Assembly or the Security Council, as appropriate and also requested the Secretary-General to continue to provide the Committee with all the necessary facilities for the performance of its tasks.

Since the Committee has no control over the timing of the events that it is called upon to discuss, it needs to meet throughout the year as circumstances dictate. On the basis of past experience, it is envisaged that the Committee will require facilities for approximately six meetings during the session. These would be in addition to the solemn meeting to commemorate the International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People, which is already included in the approved calendar for 2001.

In light of the above, I would like to request that authorization again be granted to the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People to hold meetings during the forthcoming fifty-sixth session of the General Assembly, as necessary for carrying out the important mandate entrusted to it by the Assembly.

B. Resumed first session of the Commission for Social Development acting as the preparatory committee for the Second World Assembly on Ageing

Memorandum dated 11 July 2001 from the Secretary of the preparatory committee

I would like to confirm our discussions regarding the dates for the resumed first session of the Commission for Social Development acting as the preparatory committee for the Second World Assembly on Ageing.

As you know, it had been agreed by the preparatory committee that its work should not resume before the Third Committee concludes its deliberations in November. The proposed conclusion of the work of the Third Committee is tentatively scheduled for 28 November. Consequently, the bureau of the preparatory committee has requested that the resumption (and conclusion) of its session be held from 10 to 14 December. This would enable regional and negotiating groups to have a few days to finalize their positions following the conclusion of the Third Committee.

The purpose of the resumption of the session is to take action on proposals for the format of the World Assembly (which must be done before the end of the year) and to launch the substantive negotiations on the outcome text, which are now seriously overdue.

I should be grateful if you would bring this information for the attention of the Committee on Conferences for its approval.

C. Committee on Relations with the Host Country

Letter dated 23 July 2001 from the Secretary of the Committee

As in previous years, I hereby submit a request that the Committee on Relations with the Host Country be permitted to meet during the fifty-sixth session of the General Assembly.

This request is based on the Committee's mandate set out in General Assembly resolution 2819 (XXVI) of 15 December 1971 authorizing the Committee to meet periodically during the year or whenever the need arises. The Committee, since its establishment in 1971, has always met during the regular sessions of the Assembly in order to consider, among other things, problems experienced by delegations of Member States, to finalize its annual report and to present it to the General Assembly.

Pursuant to its resolution 55/154 of 12 December 2000, the Assembly requested the Committee to continue its work in conformity with General Assembly resolution 2819 (XXVI) and to submit a report on its work to the General Assembly at its fifty-sixth session. Owing to the nature of the Committee, its work, and previous experiences, it would suffice to make the necessary conference facilities available for two or three meetings only.

D. Working Group on the Financing of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East

Memorandum dated 24 July 2001 from the Secretary of the Working Group

In its resolution 55/124 of 8 December 2000 regarding the Working Group on the Financing of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East, the General Assembly requested that the Working Group continue its efforts, in cooperation with the Secretary-General and the Commissioner-General, to find a solution to the financial situation of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA).

In order to meet this request, the Working Group needs the latest data with regard to the UNRWA budget that is, up-to-date information on the current budget and precise indications as to the needed revenue and the anticipated contributions for the next fiscal year. UNRWA is not in a position to supply the Working Group with this timely information any earlier than September 2001, and the Working Group cannot prepare its report to the fifty-sixth session without this important material.

In view of the obligation of the Working Group to submit its up-to-date report not later than the first half of October for consideration by the Special Political and Decolonization Committee and the General Assembly, little time is available for the few meetings of the Working Group and for the preparation of its report.

It would be very much appreciated if you could draw to the attention of the Committee on Conferences the request of the Working Group that it be authorized to meet during the first weeks of the fifty-sixth session of the General Assembly.

E. Executive Board of the United Nations Development Programme and the United Nations Population Fund

Letter dated 25 July 2001 from the Officer-in-charge, Executive Board secretariat

We note that the proposed timing for the second regular session of 2001 and related meetings of the Executive Board of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) during the last quarter of 2001 will overlap with the fifty-sixth session of the General Assembly.

I understand that the Secretariat can provide full services for these meetings, subject to the granting of special permission from the General Assembly.

We would, therefore, be grateful if the Committee on Conferences could give its favourable consideration to the holding of the second regular session of the UNDP/UNFPA Executive Board during the period from 10 to 14 September 2001.

F. Executive Board of the United Nations Children's Fund

Letters dated 28 June and 2 August 2001 from the Secretary of the Executive Board

The Executive Board of the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), at its annual session in June 2001, decided to postpone its second regular session to December 2001 and to merge it with the extraordinary budget session, implementing the Board's decision in which it wished to allow UNICEF to take full advantage of conclusions and outcomes of the General Assembly special session on Children, to be held from 19 to 21 September 2001.

We are therefore kindly asking the Committee on Conferences to give favourable consideration to the request of the Executive Board to meet during the fifty-sixth session of the General Assembly. We would like to hold the second regular session of the UNICEF Executive Board from 10 to 14 December 2001.

II. Statistical information

The table below refers to meetings with interpretation held during the main part of the fifty-fifth session of the General Assembly by the bodies listed above.

Body	Number of meetings held	Hours and minutes lost		
		Late starting	Early ending	Total hours and minutes lost
1. Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People	4	0.55	2.05	3.00
2. The resumed first session of the Commission for Social Development acting as the preparatory committee for the Second World Assembly on Ageing	-	-	-	-
3. Committee on Relations with the Host Country	2	0.50	3.45	4.35
4. Working Group on the Financing of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East	2	0.20	1.55	2.15
5. Executive Board of the United Nations Development Programme and the United Nations Population Fund	11	2.35	1.50	4.25
6. UNICEF	5	1.15	-	1.15